Dear Friend of the UConn Music Department,

I am thrilled to be able to offer this newsletter in an effort to keep our alumni and other friends informed about happenings in our Department. We hope to publish this newsletter every December, so please be sure to contact us with any news you’d like us to include next year.

I’d also recommend a visit to Storrs to take in one of our fabulous concerts! If you haven’t been on campus in a few years, you will be amazed at the transformation of Storrs Center, right across the road from the School of Fine Arts. We have also begun a steady program of improvements to von der Mehden Recital Hall, including a major stage renovation this past summer.

We have 135 events on our calendar annually, so it is impossible to list all of them! Please see the UConn Music website or the UConn Music Facebook page to find out about all of our upcoming events.

As the pressure on our state budget continues to grow, it is more important than ever that we let you know about the wonderful work of UConn Music! Please consider a donation to our programs by visiting our website, opening the “Outreach and Community” tab, and clicking “Donate.” Our very best for 2018!

— Eric Rice, Department Head

Conducting and Ensemble News

The Department is in the second year of its new Ensemble in Residence program, which has been generously funded by a three-year grant from the Office of the Provost. This program sends UConn ensembles to the regional campuses to perform a concert once per semester, providing a wonderful link between the regional campuses and the main campus. Another important goal is to allow high school students from each area to attend a UConn concert closer to their homes. If you are a high school music teacher, be sure to attend one of these incredible concerts with your students in 2018! See our website or contact the music office for more information.

Dr. Jeffrey Renshaw performed his final concert as director of UConn’s Wind Ensembles on November 30, capping a twenty-five year career as Director of Wind Ensembles in the Department. The program consisted of Stravinsky’s The Firebird as transcribed for wind ensemble by Randy Earles and edited by Frederick Fennel; Auguries of Innocence by William Pitts; and premieres of Point of Tranquility – Idyll for Winds, Brass, and Percussion after a Painting by Morris Louis by Dr. Kenneth Fuchs as well as The Awakening Hour by Dr. Joseph Schwantner, with both composers in attendance. Dr. Schwantner’s piece was made possible by contributions to the Jeffrey H. Renshaw Fund for New Music. For the second half of the program, alumni were welcomed to the stage to perform two movements from Holst’s Suite in E-flat, Grainger’s Irish Tune from County Derry, and a surprise performance of Sousa’s Stars and Stripes Forever. Dr. Renshaw will be on leave during the spring semester, and a search is underway for his replacement.

Area News

Brass and Percussion

Highlights from the Brass and Percussion area this year include a master class by John Manning, Professor of Tuba and Euphonium at the University of Iowa and a member of the Atlantic Brass Quintet; a lecture and master class by acclaimed trumpeter Doc Severinsen; a clinic by the Brass Quintet of the Navy Band of the Northeast; and Brass and Percussion Day, an annual event in which we welcomed more than forty high school students and teachers.

Composition

Renowned composer Richard Danielpour gave a master class to composition students during his three-day residency in the Department of Music in September.

Keyboard

Thanks to a generous gift from the Portell Foundation, the Department of Music was able to purchase a new Steinway D grand piano in October. School of Fine Arts Dean Anne D’Alleva led a delegation that included Dr. Angelina Gadeliya, Dr. Eric Rice, and Portell trustees to select the instrument, which arrived in November in time for the Aria and Concerto Competition Winners Concert featuring Olga Radovic, piano (’19, MM). Please learn about our All-Steinway School initiative at steinway.uconn.edu.

The Heilig Memorial Concert on October 21 featured renowned pianist Piotr Anderszewski on the evening following UConn’s annual Piano Day. The area hosted a Bach keyboard festival in November that featured harpsichordist Arthur Haas. In April, the area’s “piano project” called “A Night in Paris” saw students...
Conducting and Ensemble News, continued

In April, the Wind Ensembles premiered David Dzubay’s Chamber Concerto for Solo Trumpet, Violin, and Wind Ensemble. Dzubay’s work is a result of the 11th Sackler Prize in Composition in 2015. The soloists were Dr. Louis Hanzlík, trumpet, and Dr. Solomiya Ivakhiv, violin.

UConn Choirs and the Jorgensen Center hosted over 600 singers from around the state for Eric Whitacre day in March.

UConn Choirs (Concert Choir, Chamber Singers, Collegium Musicum, and Women’s Choir) will tour Austria and Italy over Spring Break in 2018. Venues will include Salzburg Cathedral; the Basilica of San Marco, Venice; Santa Maria del Fiore (the Duomo), Florence; and St. Peter’s Basilica and the Sistine Chapel, Rome.

The UConn Chamber Singers, directed by Associate Professor of Choral Studies Dr. Jamie Spillane, and the UConn Collegium Musicum, directed by Associate Professor of Music History Dr. Eric Rice, performed at Stamford’s Fish Church (pictured) in November and on the Avery Point campus in April as part of the Ensemble in Residence Program.

The UConn Chamber Singers performed at the Connecticut High School Outstanding Arts Awards Banquet in April, where Dr. Spillane also gave the keynote address. In March, the ensemble performed as part of the Westerly Chorus series in Rhode Island and at the State Capitol in Hartford as part of Connecticut Arts Day.

The UConn Collegium Musicum gave the North American premiere of the Brokes-Passion by eighteenth-century composer Reinhard Keiser in February, with DMA candidate Jun Lee conducting.

Earthtones Vocal Ensemble, directed by Dr. Mary Ellen Junda, Professor of Music, performed “Voices of the Vietnam War” in December. The concert marks the fiftieth anniversary of the start of the Tet Offensive in January of 1968.

The UConn Percussion Ensemble, under the leadership of Adjunct Professor Robert McEwan, performed a concert for the 2017 Connecticut Percussive Arts Society’s Day of Percussion.

The Pride of Connecticut Marching Band has had another successful season, joined by new faculty members Ricardo Brown, Associate Director of Bands, and UConn alumna Jessica Von Villas, Assistant Director of Bands. Marvin McNeill has left UConn to pursue a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology at Wesleyan University. We miss Marvin! But we are thrilled to have our new colleagues in the band area. The tradition of second line bands continues at UConn: the Blueine Brass Band is the newest addition, though we are still following the Funky Dawgz!

Area News, continued

performing music for solo piano, for four hands, and for two pianos by Debussy, Milhaud, Piazzolla, and Ravel.

The keyboard area hosted piano master classes by Piotr Anderszewski; composer Richard Danielpour; Luis de Mauro Castro, Professor of Piano at the Hartt School of Music; Yuri Kim of the Mannes School of Music; and Vladimir Valjarevic of the Mannes School of Music and Rutgers University.

In March, DMA students Mo Tian and Lilly Gardiner performed with Dr. Angelina Gadeliya, Assistant Professor in Residence of Keyboard Studies, at Steinway Hall in New York for the UConn Founder’s Society.

Music Education

Music education majors Katie Crawford and Joseph Sosa led a clinic for Seymour High School Choirs in April. Master’s student Rex Sturdevant will be participating on a panel on music teacher evaluation and policy at the NAfME 2018 Music Research and Teacher Education National Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Justin Daly has been appointed Vice President of the Connecticut NAfME Collegiate board, working with other music education majors around the state on professional development and social events for pre-service music teachers.

Students in their junior year have had the opportunity to work with some nearby schools in choral methods, including Ashford School, Mamaroneck High School in New York, Foran High School in Milford, and Southeast Elementary School in Mansfield. See Alumni News to read the placements of our recent graduates!

Strings

The UConn String Festival in March hosted seventy high school string players from around the state. Three student quartets-in-residence — the Agrios, Meraki, and Osiris String Quartets — performed in master classes with the Auryn and Takacz Quartets. The Dover String Quartet also offered a master class to two quartets in March. String students had additional master classes with Julie Eskar, concertmaster of the Danish National Chamber Orchestra; violinist Pamela Frank and physical therapist Howard Nelson, offering a presentation on improving biomechanics while performing (in collaboration with the Department of Dramatic Arts); Professor of Violin Emeritus Theodore Arm; and Professor of Violin Wendy Sharp of the Yale School of Music.

The Osiris Quartet performed at the Waterbury campus as part of Department’s Ensemble in Residence program.

Voice and Opera

2017 saw performances of H.M.S. Pinafore by Gilbert and Sullivan in Jorgensen and Le Nozze di Figaro in von der Mehden. 2018 will see two fabulous new productions: Cendrillon by Jules Massenet on January 26 (7:30 pm) and 28 (3:00 pm) at Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts; and a double-bill: Le Mariage aux Lanternes by Jacques Offenbach and Sogni Angelici by Giacomo Puccini on April 6 (7:30 pm) and 8 (3:00 pm) in von der Mehden.

UConn Voice and Opera continues to enjoy the support of the Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation, whose grants support our annual January production in Jorgensen. This year, the generous Ossen grant supports our production of Massenet’s Cendrillon.

Mark Womack joined the voice faculty in August.
Conducting and Ensemble News, continued

UConn’s Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Harvey Felder, Associate Professor of Orchestral Studies, premiered a new trombone concerto composed by Connecticut composer Ryan Jesperson. Dr. Matthew Russo, Adjunct Professor of Trombone, was the soloist. The orchestra performed a program featuring Mozart, Tchaikovsky, and Nielsen at the Ferguson Library in Stamford in April as part of the Department’s Ensemble in Residence Program. Guest artists were Dr. Angelina Gadeliya, Assistant Professor in Residence of Piano; Dr. Solomiya Ivakhiv, Assistant Professor of Violin and Coordinator of Strings; and Rebecca Patterson, Adjunct Professor of Cello. Also as part of the Ensemble in Residence program, the UConn String Orchestra performed in Infinity Music Hall and Bistro in Hartford in October, with Dr. Solomiya Ivakhiv again serving as violin soloist. Another UConn Symphony concert featured Dr. Ivakhiv and guest violinist Hsin- Yun Huang, who is on the faculty of both the Curtis Institute of Music and the Juilliard School. December saw the Orchestra performing its annual concert for the winners of the Aria and Concerto Competition: Grace Carver, mezzo-soprano (’18, Music Ed); Olga Radovic, piano (’19, MM); and Mai Vestergaard, violin (’20, BA).

The UConn Symphony Orchestra, Concert Choir, Festival Chorus and E.O. Smith High School Chamber Choir, combined to present Ralph Vaughan Williams’s introspective Serenade to Music and his monumental A Sea Symphony at Jorgensen in November. Soloists were soprano Dr. Constance Rock, Associate Professor of Voice and Coordinator of Voice; and baritone Mark Womack, Adjunct Professor of Voice. Dr. Alain Frogley, Professor of Music History and a renowned Vaughan Williams scholar, presented a pre-concert lecture.

The UConn Symphonic Band performed at the Waterbury campus in April as part of the Ensemble in Residence program.

The Department hosted another annual Young Conductors Symposium in September.

Alumni News

Russel Allyn (BM ’15, Trumpet) was appointed Music Librarian of the New York City Ballet Orchestra.

Matthew Beland (BM ’15, Violin) received a scholarship to pursue a master’s in violin performance at the Manhattan School of Music.

Thaddeus Bourne (current DMA student, Voice) joined the voice faculty of Butler University, Indiana, in a full-time position.

Kathryn Bowden (BM’ 10, PC ’11, Voice, pictured) made her Metropolitan Opera debut in October, singing the role of the Queen of the Night in Die Zauberflöte under the direction of James Levine.

Matthew Burke (BM ’14, MM ’16, Voice) joined the prestigious U.S. Army Chorus of the United States Army Band, “Pershing’s Own.”

Area News, continued

Jazz

UConn’s new Afro-Cuban Jazz Ensemble performed for the Greater Hartford Arts Council’s Annual Meeting in November. Jazz master classes were with drummer E.J. Strickland in March and saxophonist and composer Benny Golson in November. In February, the UConn Jazz Ensemble performed at the Manchester High School Jazz Festival, where Earl MacDonald, Professor and Director of Jazz Studies, and Doug Maher, Adjunct Professor of Jazz Studies, served as judges.

Faculty News

Dr. Richard Bass is retired as of 2018, capping a thirty-year career at UConn. Dr. Bass was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from the School of Fine Arts.

A new piano concerto entitled The Spiritualist by Dr. Kenneth Fuchs, Professor of Composition, will be released on the Naxos label next year. He will serve on the faculty of Connecticut Summerfest next summer.

Dr. Heather DeSavage (Ph.D. ’16), Adjunct Instructor of Music History, was awarded the Outstanding Adjunct Award in the School of Fine Arts.

Dr. Angelina Gadeliya, Assistant Professor in Residence and Keyboard Area Coordinator, performed a new work entitled The Four Elements by Richard Danielpour as part of his three-day residency in the Department of Music. She also toured Korea with the DeCoda Ensemble this fall.

Dr. Daniel Goldberg joined the Department of Music faculty in August as Assistant Professor in Residence of Music Theory.

Dr. Louis Hanzlik, Associate Professor of Trumpet and Brass Area Coordinator, is in his fourth season as a member of the world-renowned American Brass Quintet. The group’s latest recording, Perspectives, was released this season, and they have performances scheduled in fifteen states, with world premieres of compositions by Stephen Franklin, Kenneth Fuchs, Phillip Lasser, Eric Nathan, and John Zorn, as well as master classes for students from many levels and locations — from high school students in São Paulo, Brazil, to conservatory students at the Curtis Institute of Music.

Robert Hoyle, Adjunct Professor of Horn, performed as principal horn in Mahler’s Eighth Symphony with Berkshire Choral International and the Springfield Symphony Orchestra in July.

Dr. Solomiya Ivakhiv, Assistant Professor of Violin and String Area Coordinator, performed Haydn and Mendelssohn concerti with the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Ukraine in Kyiv in August. This repertory will be recorded as part of an album called Singles and Doubles: Haydn and Mendelssohn Concertos.

Dr. Mary Ellen Junda, Professor of Music, conducted the Treble Honors Choir at the Connecticut Music Educators Association In-Service Conference in Hartford in April.

Earl MacDonald, Professor of Jazz, gave a performance at the Hartford Public Library with his new quartet in April as part of the Baby Grand Jazz Series. He was mentioned in a recent article called “The Tools of Engagement” by Dan Bilawsky in JazzTimes. His new recording Open Borders was released in November.

After a long stint on the music faculty at UConn, Marvin McNeill is now at Wesleyan University studying for a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology.
Alumni News, continued

Ryan Burns (MM ’12, DMA ’17, Voice) toured with the nationally-acclaimed Jessica Lang Dance company singing the solo title role in their production of The Wanderer, a dance piece set to Schubert’s Die schöne Müllerin.

Matthew Denegre (BA ’16, Tuba) began his graduate studies as a scholarship student in tuba performance at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Sarah Falkenstine (MuEd, ’17, Trumpet) was appointed as the Band Director at Bulkeley High School, Hartford.

Megan Ferreira (BA ’16, Trumpet) has fully implemented her music and engineering degrees, serving as a member of the Willimantic Symphony Orchestra and as a Design Engineer at MTU Aero Engines.

Nathaniel Gworek (DMA ’16, Percussion) was appointed to the faculty at Georgia College.

Spencer Hamlin (BM ’12, PC ’13, MM ’15, Voice) made his New York City Opera debut in October, singing the leading tenor role of Detective Thibodeau in Tobias Picker’s Dolores Claiborne.

Anthony Leatham (current DMA student, Voice) joined the voice faculty of Concordia College, Minnesota, on the tenure track. This season he also joins the roster of the Metropolitan Opera Chorus for Puccini’s Turandot and Verdi’s Requiem.

Sandra Marante (PC ’17, Voice) debuted at the Princeton Festival as Aldonza in Man of La Mancha in July.

Myles Mocarski (MM ’16, Violin) is pursuing a master’s in violin performance at the University of Maryland, where he holds a teaching assistantship.

Peter Nowak (BM ’16, Violin) is pursuing a master’s degree in violin performance at Ithaca College.

Christina Quental (BM ’14, Voice) is now an admissions counselor at the Manhattan School of Music.

Ali Rainwater (MuEd, ’17, Voice) teaches music at East Haddam Elementary School in Moodus, CT.

Spencer Reese (BM ’13, current DMA, Voice) was a summer resident artist with Ohio Light Opera, where he starred as Billy Crocker in Anything Goes and served as choreographer for the entire seven-show season.

Liam Reynolds (BA ’16, Trombone) has recently combined his degrees in music and math, serving as a music performer and teacher of math in western Connecticut.

Allie Savage (MuEd, ’17, Voice) is the music teacher at Tokeneke Elementary School in Darien, CT.

The vocal ensemble VOCE, which includes many UConn Music alumni and is directed by Mark Singleton (MM ’01, Conducting), was on the ballot for preliminary voting for the sixtieth Grammy Awards in the Best Choral Performance category for their album Music of the Spheres.

Olivia Tempesta (MuEd, ’17, Clarinet) teaches music at the Dual Language and Arts Magnet Middle School in Watertown, CT.

Jessica Von Villas (BA ’12, Horn, MM ’16, Conducting) was appointed as an Assistant Professor in Residence and Assistant Director of Athletic Bands at the University of Connecticut’s Department of Music.

Faculty News, continued

Mr. McNeill was awarded the School of Fine Arts Special Achievement Award for his work with the Funky Dawgz Second Line Brass Band and the Charter Oak Cultural Center.

Dr. Jesús Ramos-Kittrell joined the Department of Music faculty in August as Assistant Professor in Residence of Musicology and Ethnomusicology.

Dr. Jeffrey Renshaw is retiring in 2018. See Ensembles.

Ensemble Origo, directed by Department Head Dr. Eric Rice, was praised for its performance of Dr. Rice’s reconstruction of “Luther’s Deutsche Messe” in an extensive New York Times article on the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation by music critic James Oestreich.

Dr. Glenn Stanley is retired as of 2018. As a parting gift to the Department, he offered a concert of Beethoven’s chamber music with extensive commentary at the end of the spring semester, collaborating with Professors Rod Nelma, bass-baritone; Dr. Angelina Gadeliya, piano; Dr. Theodore Arm, violin; and Rebecca Patterson, cello.

Alumni News, continued

David Wharton (current DMA student, Trumpet) was appointed to the University of Rhode Island faculty as Artist/Teacher of Trumpet.

Lisa Williamson (PC ’09, current DMA student, Voice) made her debut with Portland Opera in July, singing lead roles in a double bill of David Lang’s The Little Match Girl Passion and The Difficulty of Crossing A Field.

Jack Zaino (Music Ed, 2017) teaches music at the Swift Middle School in Watertown, CT.